Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the instant application:

Listing of Claims:

1.   (Currently Amended) An instant messaging method comprising the steps of:

displaying a user selectable list of subscribers of an instant messaging service;

selecting a group of subscribers in an inactive state from the list ~~of an instant messaging service~~;

designating at least one action associated with the group, the at least one designated action ~~for an instant messaging client~~ to be automatically ~~perform~~ performed with respect to each subscriber in the group in response to a state change ~~of a subscriber changing to a specified state~~;

~~associating said designated action with said group;~~

automatically detecting ~~that~~ a state change of at least one of said subscribers in said group ~~is the specified state~~; and

automatically executing said designated action associated with said group for said at least one subscriber responsive to said detecting step.

2.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein said action is an instant messaging initiation action that initiates an instant messaging session between said client and said at least one subscriber.

3.   (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said action includes at least one action selected from the group consisting of a notification action, a prompting action, and a message conveyance action.

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4.   (Previously Presented)   The method of claim 1, wherein said selecting, said designating, said associating, said detecting, and said executing steps are performed by said instant messaging client.

5.   (Original) The method of claim 4, wherein said instant messaging client includes a Lotus Sametime (TM) type client.

6-7.   (Cancelled).

8.   (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein said ~~specified state change results from a~~ state change is a change from an inactive state to an active state ~~for said at least one subscriber from one or more possible inactive states to one or more possible active states~~.

9.   (Cancelled)

10.   (Previously Presented)   The method of claim 1, wherein said at least one action further comprises presenting within a graphical user interface a list of said subscribers in said group and within said graphical user interface, visually distinguishing said at least one subscriber from other subscribers in said list.

11.   (Currently Amended)   A computer-readable storage having stored thereon, a computer program having a plurality of code sections, said code sections executable by a computer for causing the computer to perform the steps of:

    displaying a user selectable list of subscribers of an instant messaging service;

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selecting a group of subscribers <u>in an inactive state from the list</u> ~~of an instant messaging service~~;

designating at least one action <u>associated with the group, the at least one designated action</u> ~~for an instant messaging client~~ to <u>be</u> automatically ~~perform~~ <u>performed with respect to each subscriber in the group</u> in response to a state <u>change</u> ~~of a subscriber changing to a specified state~~;

~~associating said designated action with said group;~~

automatically detecting ~~that~~ a state change of at least one of said subscribers in said group ~~is the specified state~~; and

automatically executing said designated action associated with said group for said at least one subscriber responsive to said detecting step.

12. (Previously Presented) The computer-readable storage of claim 11, wherein said action is an instant messaging initiation action that initiates an instant messaging session between said client and said one subscriber.

13. (Previously Presented) The computer-readable storage of claim 11, wherein said action includes at least one action selected from the group consisting of a notification action, a prompting action, and a message conveyance action.

14. (Previously Presented) The computer-readable storage of claim 11, wherein said selecting, said designating, said associating, said detecting, and said executing steps are performed by said instant messaging client.

15. (Previously Presented) The computer-readable storage of claim 14, wherein said instant messaging client includes a Lotus Sametime (TM) type client.

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16-17. (Cancelled)

18.   (Currently Amended) The computer-readable storage of claim 11, wherein said ~~specified state change results from a~~ state change is a change from an inactive state to an active state ~~for said at least one subscriber from one or more possible inactive states to one or more possible active states.~~

19.   (Cancelled)

20.   (Previously Presented) The computer-readable storage of claim 11, wherein said at least one action further comprises presenting within a graphical user interface a list of said subscribers in said group and within said graphical user interface, visually distinguishing said at least one subscriber from other subscribers in said list.

21.   (Currently Amended) An instant messaging system comprising:

means for displaying a user selectable list of subscribers of an instant messaging service;

means for selecting a group of subscribers in an inactive state from the list ~~of an instant messaging service~~;

means for designating at least one action associated with the group, the at least one designated action ~~for an instant messaging client~~ to be automatically ~~perform~~ performed with respect to each subscriber in the group in response to a state change ~~of a subscriber changing to a specified state~~;

~~means for associating said designated action with said group;~~

means for automatically detecting ~~that~~ a state change of at least one of said

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subscribers in said group ~~is the specified state~~; and

means for automatically executing said designated action associated with said group for said at least one subscriber responsive to said detecting step.

22-25. (Cancelled).

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